

[22 February, 2001] RAJYA SABHA

(c) if so, the details of such banks; and

(d) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) The staff strength in Public Sector Banks as on 31.3.2000 was as follows:—

		(No. in lacs)
Officers	:	2.43
Clerks	:	4.39
Subordinate staff	:	1.92
Total	:	8.74

The Voluntary Retirement Scheme is still in operation and it is not possible to indicate the exact number of employees in banks after VRS.

(b) to (d) Government have not received any information about closure of branches due to VRS. However, banks are in the process of redeploying the employees from the surplus pockets to the deficit pockets to ensure proper staffing of branches.

Restoration of communication links in earthquake Ravaged Gujarat

*10. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to set up an ultra-modern telecommunication system for the earthquake ravaged districts in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have installed Satellite Telephones in the remote areas/villages in Gujarat; if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what is the estimated loss on account of damage to the

telecom system due to earthquake and by when the repair and restoration of telecommunication system is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The modernization plan of telecommunication network includes:

- (i) Introduction of cellular, WLL and ISDN services.
- (ii) Establishing transmission network based on optical fibre and providing alternate routes for connectivity to the national network.
- (iii) Rehabilitation of access network and usage of HDSL and DLC systems.

(c) Yes, Sir. 23 Satellite based telephones were installed after the earthquake as per details at statement (*See below*) Many of these phones were used as Public Call Offices.

(d) The estimated loss on account of damages caused by the earthquake to the telecommunication system is expected to be around Rs. 200 crores. The restoration of telecommunication network is in full swing. Most of the exchanges and all the transmission links have been restored. The present focus is on restoration of faults in telephone lines and repair/reconstruction of damaged buildings which may take 3—6 months.

Statement

Details of Inmarsat PCOs provided in Earthquake Ravaged Gujarat

1. Bhuj Mundra Road Exchange.
2. Bhuj Mundra Road Exchange.
3. Madhapar Exchange.
4. Naliya Exchange.
5. Rahpar Exchange.
6. Mandvi Exchange.
7. Bhachau Exchange.
8. Mundra Exchange.
9. Gagodar Exchange.

[22 February, 2001] **RAJYA SABHA**

10. Vithon Exchange.
11. Nakhatrana Exchange.
12. Kotda (J) Exchange.
13. Airport (Bhuj)
14. Samakhyali.
15. Anjar Exchange.
16. Bachau.
17. Gandhidam Police Station.
18. Rahpar
19. Bhuj (Jubili Baug)
20. Bhuj (Jubili Baug)
21. Dayapar Exchange.
22. Khavada Police Station.
23. Sumrasar.

Upward revision of income tax limit of Rs. 1.5 lakh

***11. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a widespread demand in various sections of the economy for an upward revision in Rs. 1.5 lakh income slab which attracts personal tax rate of 30 per cent;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) whether Government are aware that upward revision of the limit will infuse tax honesty and result in higher tax collections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c) These suggestions are under consideration during the current budget exercise and the decision of the Government, if any, will be reflected in the Finance Bill, 2001 scheduled to be introduced in the Lok Sabha on 28th February, 2001.